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dren, who in their plans for them, act as if they thought *war* would be perpetual? The fact is, the inhabitants of these countries are generally a calculating people; they were growing rich in commerce, and speculative as to the modes of gain; unfortunately they have turned this calculating commercial disposition into forming plans for getting their sons provided for in different lines of military services, not excepting fitting out an additional number as surgeons for the army and navy. Hitherto war has afforded parents an easy mode of relieving themselves from parental cares; "and many sons foredoomed their fathers' souls to cross," have been thus disposed of and sent unfledged into the world, to have their morals further corrupted by a military life; but the speculation may not always succeed. I dread to contemplate on the return of the many dissipated characters, which a peace would bring back into the bosom of families. But here lies the great evil, many are interested in the continuance of war, and lift up their voice against the blessings of peace.

The general good and self-interest pull different ways, and the public weal is disregarded amidst interested clamours, and private motives. I lament over my country, and regret to behold so general a diffusion of a military spirit, and to perceive it to enter so generally into domestic calculations. I forbear at present to say much on the immoral tendency of war, but have principally directed attention to the impolicy of acting on military maxims, as connected with plans for the putting forward our youth into active life. I am sensible my opinions are not popular, and probably they may not be well received. It is likely also they are not in unison, with the sentiments of many immediately connected with your work, but I put in my claim to be heard, for I think it is a privilege due to all who write with modesty, and without unwarrantable assurance. "Even truths most bitter, may be told without bitterness." Indulgence is due to a writer who uses his well intended efforts, to stop an overwhelming torrent, which, in his esti-

mation is in danger of proving destructive to public morals. Such he considers are the present military schemes entertained by persons in private life. And though this manner of treating the subject may thwart many powerful and fashionable prejudices, yet it surely is allowable in a periodical work, which it is hoped may descend with some reputation to posterity, to advance sentiments, which, although now despised, may have due place hereafter, when the temporary infatuation of the present times is forgotten. It should be your aim not to court popularity, at the expense of real usefulness, or future reputation; but by rising above prevailing errors, however wide-spreading, lay a solid foundation for real usefulness: by so acting, a more lasting reputation will be acquired, than by compliances to gain present popularity. K.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

ESSAY ON BALLAD COMPOSITION, WITH
POETICAL EXAMPLES.

THE human mind in its most wild and uncultivated state, where neither an intercourse with well-regulated society could give it polish, nor a knowledge of the finer arts extend its force, has nevertheless been found to possess, in many instances, a delicacy of thought and tenderness of expression, which when exercised upon such external objects as pleased it, or such mental operations as it loved to dwell on, have both interested and surprized the more enlightened classes of mankind. The song of "The Laplander," the dirge of the "American Indian," and the "Simple Chant of the African," have been heard with pleasure in Europe, and it is from possessing the same qualities, *simplicity* and *tenderness*, that ancient ballads, a species of poetry invented in an age when learning and taste were scarcely reviving, and composed by men whose untutored muse never felt the plastic impression of education, have been so long and so universally pleasing that several modern writers of considerable merit have composed Ballad pieces, in which they have imitated the style, the idioms and even the

metre of these ancient legends, and have thus established their hitherto doubtful claims in the ranks of poetical composition. Thus the pathos and simplicity of ancient legendary tales is beautifully delineated in the "Hermit," by Goldsmith; "The Hermit of Warkworth," by Percy, and "Rosalinde," by Scot.

The subjects of Ancient Ballads, though numerous, may generally be comprized under three heads, the legendary, the historical, and the elegiac; of these, the first is esteemed the most ancient; it contains such songs as commemorate extraordinary tournaments, the feats of imaginary heroes or traditions of popular superstition. Pieces of this description seem not to have derived much ornament from music, or to have depended on it for success; accompanied by airs so unaffecting as to convey little melody to the ear, they were usually more calculated to keep alive the interest of their auditors by incident than by modulation of voice, and from hence it is that in "Gill Morrice," "The English Lord in Spain," and "The Wandering Lady," the tunes are unvaried and monotonous, the incidents beautiful and affecting.

The following tale taken from Irish tradition is deferently submitted as an example of the legendary; farther illustrations of the historical and elegiac, shall, if acceptable, be offered at some future period.

KINNELM AND EVA.
AN IRISH TALE.

WOODSTOCK! * pride of Irish story,
Raising high its tower'd head,
Still proclaims its former glory,
Near old Barrow's winding bed.
Through those halls where winds low
sighing,
Mourn the havoc made by time;
Once the bard, with fingers flying,
Swept th' Escreen with martial rhyme.
Oft within those dark recesses,
Perish'd many a chief of old,

* Woodstock Castle, a noble ruin situated on the banks of the river Barrow, about a mile from Athy, is still remarkable for a curious chimney-piece in good preservation, adorned with curious figures in bass-relief.

† The Escreen was an Irish martial air, every stanza of which was commenced by a single voice, and terminated with a full chorus. It is still sung round garlands and bonfires on the 23d of June, by the peasantry of Connaught.

And this bloodstain'd wall confesses,
Horrors human tongue ne'er told.
Woodstock's lord once lov'd a fair one,
And brought her to his arms;
Heress to a neighbouring baron,
Bless'd with beauty's softest charms.
But her sire had pledg'd his daughter,
To a gentle knight hard by,
Who with tender love had sought her,
Call'd Sir Kennelm of Athy.
Vengeful thoughts seiz'd Woodstock's
bosom,
When denied the blooming maid,
Yet to none did he disclose 'em,
But his plot in secret laid.
Straight he made him preparation,
Solemn tourney to proclaim,
And forthwith sent invitation,
To many a noble knight and dame,
To partake at Woodstock hall,
Pomp and masque and pageant gay.
All within the castle wall,
On St. John's high holiday.
Gladsome rose the festive morn,
Rob'd in cloudless golden light;
Loudly blew the bugle horn,
Banners grac'd the castle's height.
And many a damsel, passing fair,
Deck'd in costly rich array,
And many a noble from afar,
Pass'd through Woodstock's gates that
day.
There the youth of Monaghallen,
In their Gallow-glouch† were seen,
And the maids of fair Dunsallin,
Clad in robes of native green.
Oh! who is he, whose red-rose cheek,
Blooms high in health and beauty's pride,
Whose blue eyes love's soft language
speak,
To the fair lady by his side?
'Tis Kinneim, flower of chivalry,
And Eva with the golden hair,
Of Rheban's youth the bravest he,
And she of Curragh's maids most fair.
Feast and dance their joys imparting,
Gilt with mirth the splendid scene,
Till each at midnight hour departing,
Hied them o'er the distant green.
Kinneim, quoth Lord Woodstock, stay thee
With thy lady here this night,
False Minulta‡ may betray thee,
Long he owes thee deadly spite.
Much I thank thee courteous baron,
Though my heart ne'er felt disuay,

† Gallow-glouch or (more properly) Gallow-glass, was a part of the habit of the ancient Irish.

‡ Minulta, a turbulent Irish chieftain whose estate was forfeited and conferred on a younger branch of the Fitzgerald family.

Still to ease this trembling fair one,
 Here beneath thy roof I'll stay.
 Sad and dismal was the hour,
 Darker frown'd the leaden gloom,
 When yielding to a villain's power
 Kinnelm seal'd his final doom.
 From that fatal moment never,
 Eva to her friends return'd,
 Mystic was her fate for ever,
 Long the hapless maid they mourn'd.
 But upon the seventh morn,
 Kinnelm's floating corpse was found,
 Down the river's current borne,
 Pierc'd with many a ghastly wound.
 Near the river stands a mound,
 O'er it bending willows wave,
 Water lilies spring around,
 And this I've heard is Kinnelm's grave.
 And still the Banshee § mourning here,
 Loves to raise her plaintive song,
 When each swift revolving year,
 Brings the feast of good St. John.
 Woodstock 'once the pride of story,
 Low is now thy tower'd head,
 Vanish'd all thy ancient glory,
 By old Barrow's winding bed. L.

For the Belfast Monthly Magazine.

A NOCTURNAL SCENE.

THE last faint gleam of the setting sun, was fading on the brow of Tully, as I left my solitary cottage, to walk with contemplation on the green banks of the river Bann. Glimmering twilight appeared, and the western hills were lost in haze. Night soon succeeded, seated on her ebon throne; her long extended arms spread a sable veil over the skies of Erin. The eye of evening was still unclosed in the west, for now fierce Leo ruled, beneath whose reign, the veil of night is of a lighter hue, than when Aquarius inundates the world. I cast my eyes to the east, but Tully's* summit was closely shrouded in a misty cloud. Tolnahunion* shed moist vapours from her furzy locks, and Massah's* heath-clad top, was dark to view. The warbling birds, had sung their farewell to the parting day. Silence assumed her arbitrary reign, and waved her sceptre o'er a slumbering world. These only were

§ Bhan-shee, corrupted from Bhan-tea (or woman of the family) is an imaginary spirit, which by nocturnal moans and lamentations, is supposed to forebode the deaths that occur in particular families.

disturbers of her peace....The night-rail chaunting her discordant song, and the loud murmurs of the falling stream, reluctant wandering from its parent hill. The winds themselves, obeyed her awful sway, the breeze was hushed in fair Gleuona's groves, or sighed its last in Rosegift's peaceful shades.

I wandered on, regardless where I strayed, I felt the calm delights of solitude, which many wish for, but too few enjoy. The pale moon rose in majesty divine, to light my footsteps, and direct my way; from Stabia's* heights she shone upon my path; her silver beams embraced the surface of the crystal Bann, and scattered lustrous pearls on its streams. While thus I viewed the imperial queen of night, ascend in glory up the eastern skies, a distant noise disturbed the silence of that tranquil hour; the long grass rustled; still the breeze was hushed, yet something seemed to intercept my way; at length assisted by the lunar rays, I plainly saw a female form advance with settled sadness seated on her brow; 'twas fair Lewina, maid of lovely grace; but sorrow's tears had washed that grace away; yet still her form was like a ridge of snow, that long had bleached upon some Alpine height; the rose was blasted where it long had bloomed; its withered beauties still enriched her cheeks; but ah! how changed from what it once had been! She started wildly when she me espied, thinking the busy world had gone to rest, nor once imagined I should meet her there!

Fear not, Lewina, hastily I said, misfortune's frowns already are severe; I wander not to multiply your fears; but whither goes Lewina at this hour?

"I go" she answered "to yon o-zier bowers, for Lindor's shade I hope will meet me there." She passed along, nor questions asked I more. Her white robe wet with dew, hung negligently o'er her decent form, her auburn locks brushed off the dew-drops from the flowery plain; the new-born tear, sad child of anguish,

*Hills lying to the north and north-east of Portglengone.